

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes ☐
no ☒

Property Name: 21-23 East Bel Air Avenue Inventory Number: HA-2188
Address: 21-23 E. Bel Air Avenue Historic district: ☐ yes ☒ no
City: Aberdeen Zip Code: 21001 County: Harford
USGS Quadrangle(s): Aberdeen
Property Owner: Richard T. Curry, Jr. Tax Account ID Number: 02001802
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 2072 Tax Map Number: 204
Project: Aberdeen MARC Station Parking Expansion Agency: MTA
Agency Prepared By: JMA, Inc. for MTA
Preparer's Name: Katherine L. Farnham Date Prepared: 8/7/2008
Documentation is presented in: Maryland Real Property Database; US Census; Aberdeen Centennial Almanac 1992; Richard F. Cronin - History of Aberdeen, 1976; C.G. Cronin - Sketches of Village to Town to City, 2006; C. M. Wright - Our Harford Heritage, 1967.
Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: ☐ Eligibility recommended ☒ Eligibility not recommended
Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G
Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:
Name of the District/Property: _____
Inventory Number: _____ Eligible: ☐ yes ☐ no Listed: ☐ yes ☐ no
Site visit by MHT Staff ☐ yes ☒ no Name: _____ Date: _____

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

The building at 21-23 East Bel Air Avenue is located on a narrow lot a short distance east of the Amtrak right-of-way. It is set close to the street with a small, landscaped front yard. Paved asphalt driveways abut the house on each side, and each terminates at a large oak tree set near the back corner of each side of the rear wing. A second large oak is present at the rear of the west driveway, and the rear lawn is shaded by several mature trees. The house is flanked on both sides by dwellings, with a duplex on the west and a large nineteenth-century dwelling to the east.

This building is a two-and-one-half-story side-gabled wood-frame double house, set on a low foundation. It has a T-plan footprint with a perpendicular rear ell. The house is clad in vinyl clapboard siding and has an asphalt-shingled roof and deep, vinyl-clad boxed eaves. The primary façade is four bays wide and has a full-width, one-story, shed-roofed porch. The porch has fluted aluminum replacement columns set on a ground-level concrete pad. Within the porch are two doors, flanked by a window on each side. Both doors have been replaced with modern six-panel vinyl-clad doors. The door in the east half of the dwelling retains an original two-light transom, but the transom in the west half has been covered over. Windows throughout the house are symmetrical in alignment. All have been replaced with one-over-one double-hung vinyl sash. Each end of the front section is two bays deep,

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Eligibility recommended ☐ Eligibility not recommended ☒
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MHT Comments:

Jim Zulawski
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

B. Kintz
Reviewer, National Register Program

2/23/09
Date

3/4/09
Date

200900312

with one full-size window on the attic level.

The rear ell is two stories in height and its second floor has shorter windows and is stepped down slightly from the front section. The ell is two bays long and two bays wide. Each side of the ell has a shed-roofed porch with a replaced wooden deck and pressure-treated lumber supports, and a modern nine-light entrance door and single window on the first floor, with two short windows above. A vent pipe for an interior first-floor bathroom is attached at the center of each side within the porch area and extending to the roof. A brick chimney rises from the center of the ell roof on the west slope.

This double dwelling and the double dwelling immediately to the west (15 East Bel Air Avenue) were located on what was a primary cross-route through Aberdeen until relatively recent times. The adjacent railroad served as a boundary between downtown Aberdeen, laid out in an original grid plan, and the Halls Crossroads area east of the tracks, which eventually was incorporated into the town and known as East Aberdeen. East Bel Air Avenue contained a number of fine late nineteenth century single houses belonging to prominent individuals in the town. The two double houses formed a buffer between these single houses on large lots to the east, and two one-story commercial properties to the west, with the railroad crossing just west of the commercial buildings. Based on census listings, the double houses appear to have been the home of several working-class tenants, contrasted with the larger owner-occupied houses to the east. Historic maps provide few clues as to the construction date of these two houses, but Maryland Real Property Tax Database indicates that 21-23 East Bel Air Avenue was constructed ca. 1900. At least one early twentieth century streetscape photograph shows a distant fragmentary view of the building and its porch looking east across the railroad crossing. The house in its present condition suggests a simple vernacular double house of this period, a type commonly seen in small towns and industrial complexes in northern Maryland and southeastern Pennsylvania.

Until the early 1980s, East Bel Air Avenue was connected to the core of Aberdeen with an at-grade railroad crossing. Around 1982, the current vehicle viaduct crossing and pedestrian bridge were constructed, which eliminated the street crossing but turned East Bel Air Avenue into a dead-end road, cutting it off both physically and visually from the downtown core. The last of the two historic commercial buildings was demolished in 1985, leaving a vacant lot and gravel road between the railroad alignment and 15 East Bel Air Avenue. The most recent use for the building was as residential apartments, but it has been vacant for some time.

Overall, the house has lost much of its integrity due to removal of ornamentation, chimneys, and other original exterior fabric; the replacement of all original porch components with modern materials; the covering of the walls and eaves with modern siding; and the wholesale replacement of all exterior windows and doors. Aside from the overall massing, porches, and fenestration pattern, little historic fabric is visible. Significant changes have occurred to the setting, notably the elimination of the nearby grade crossing, construction of the tall viaduct and pedestrian bridge, installation of parking lots, demolition of the buildings to the west and across the street, and construction of two modern apartment complexes nearby. This house appears to have been a working-class double dwelling with a front porch, but most of its original architectural elements have been removed or covered over. Research has not linked the house to anyone significant in the history of Aberdeen and Harford County. Given the building's lack of both integrity and association with important people, events and trends of the past, it is recommended not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended _____

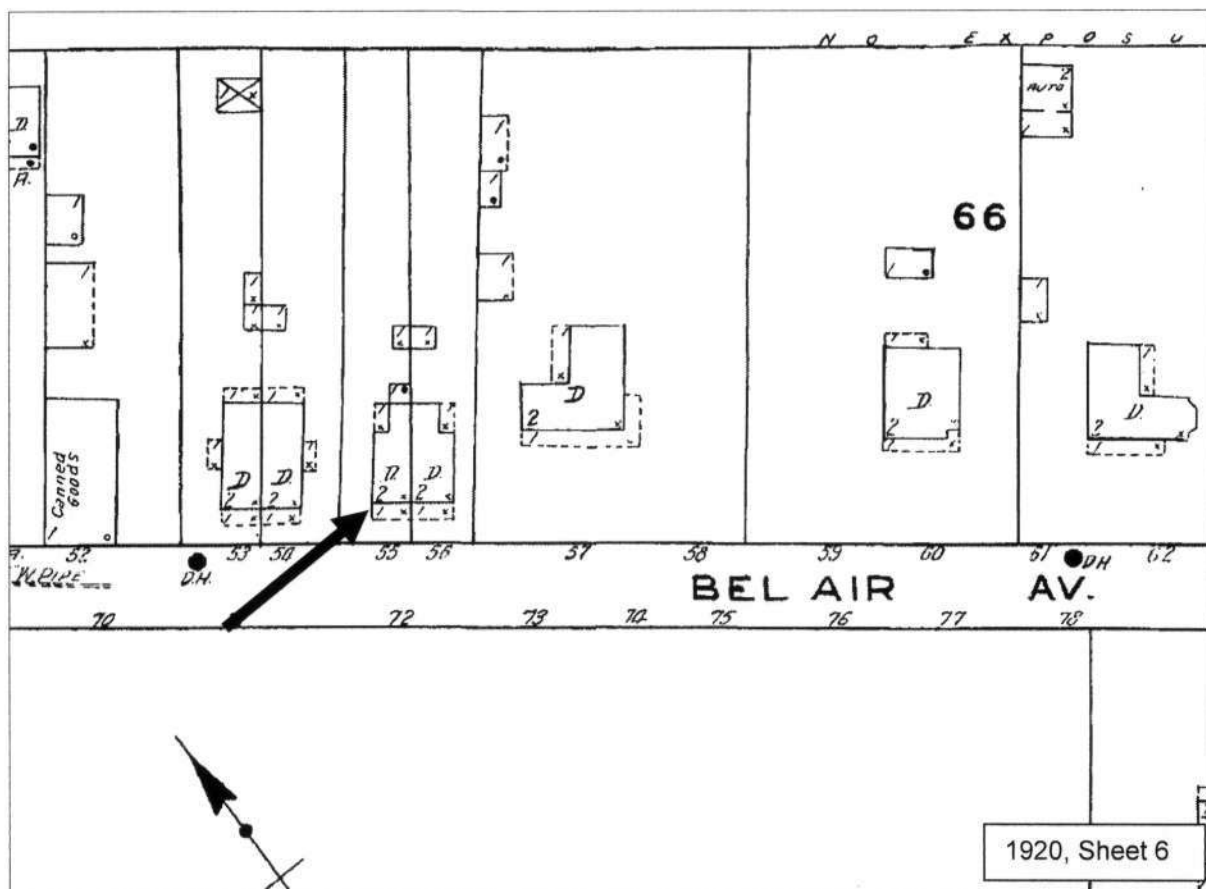
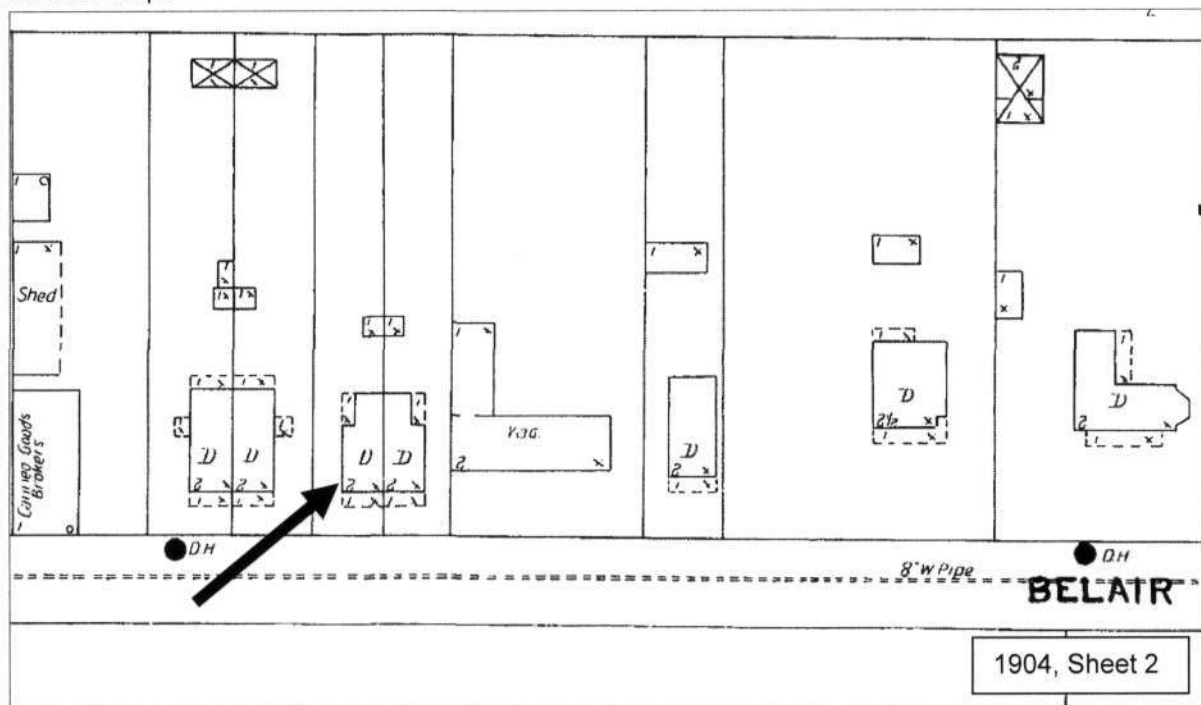
Eligibility not recommended _____

Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G

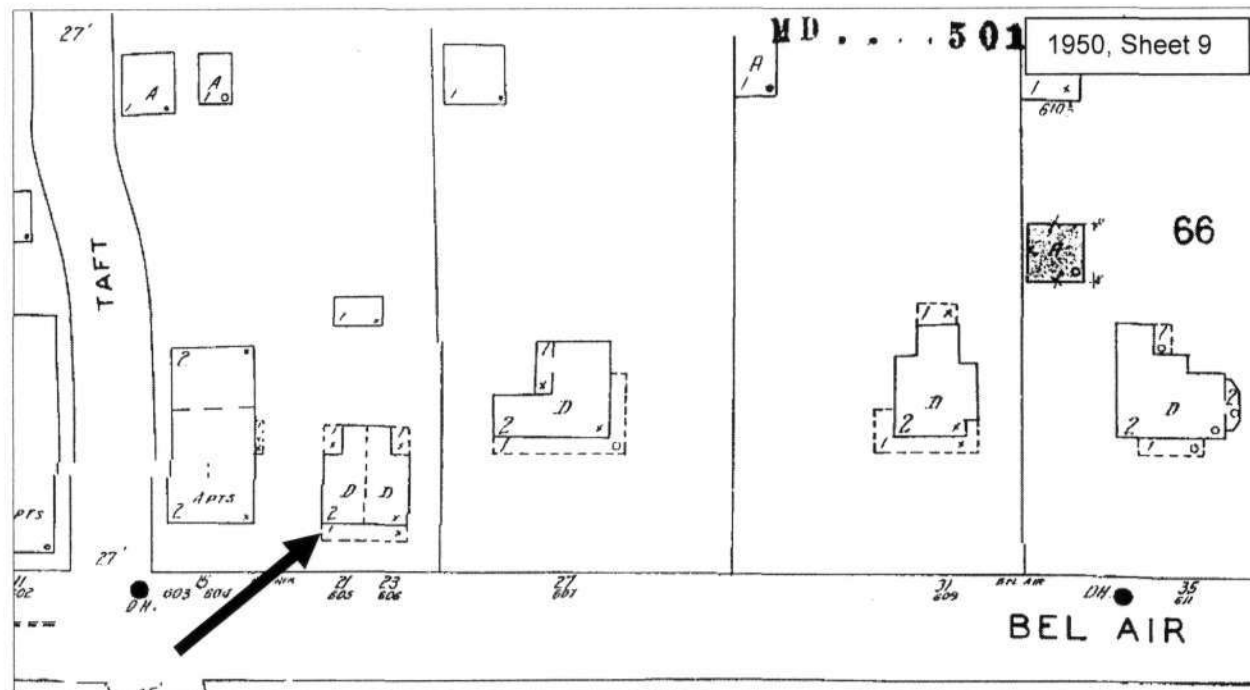
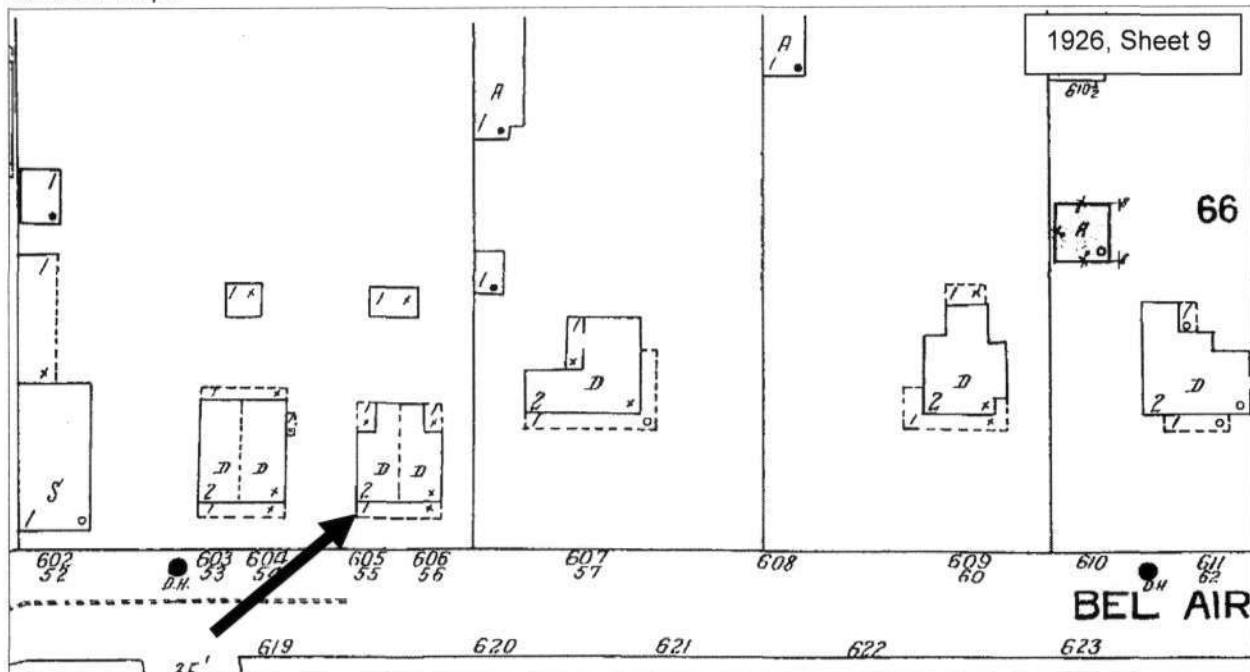
MHT Comments:

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services_____
Date_____
Reviewer, National Register Program_____
Date

HA-2188
21-23 East Bel Air Avenue
Sanborn Maps



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 21-23 East Bel Air Avenue
 Sanborn Maps

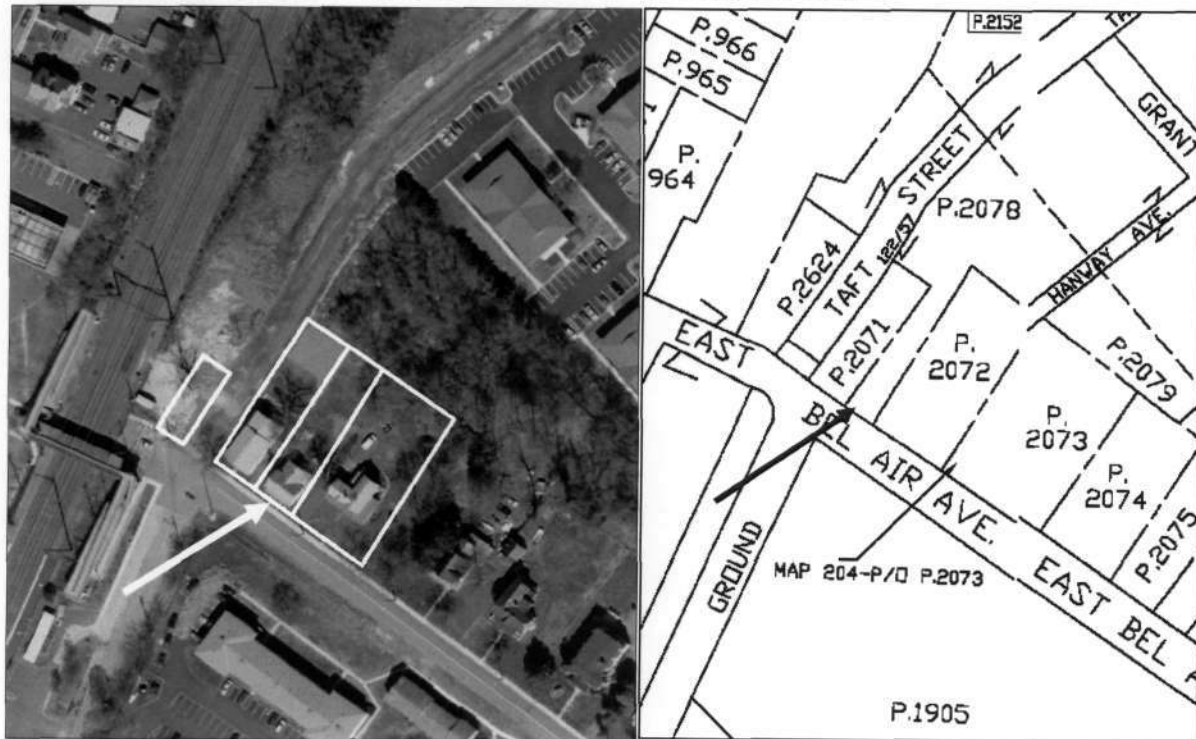


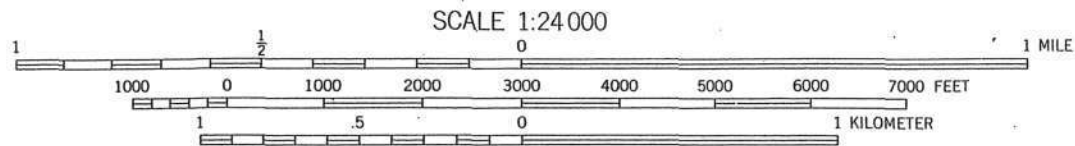
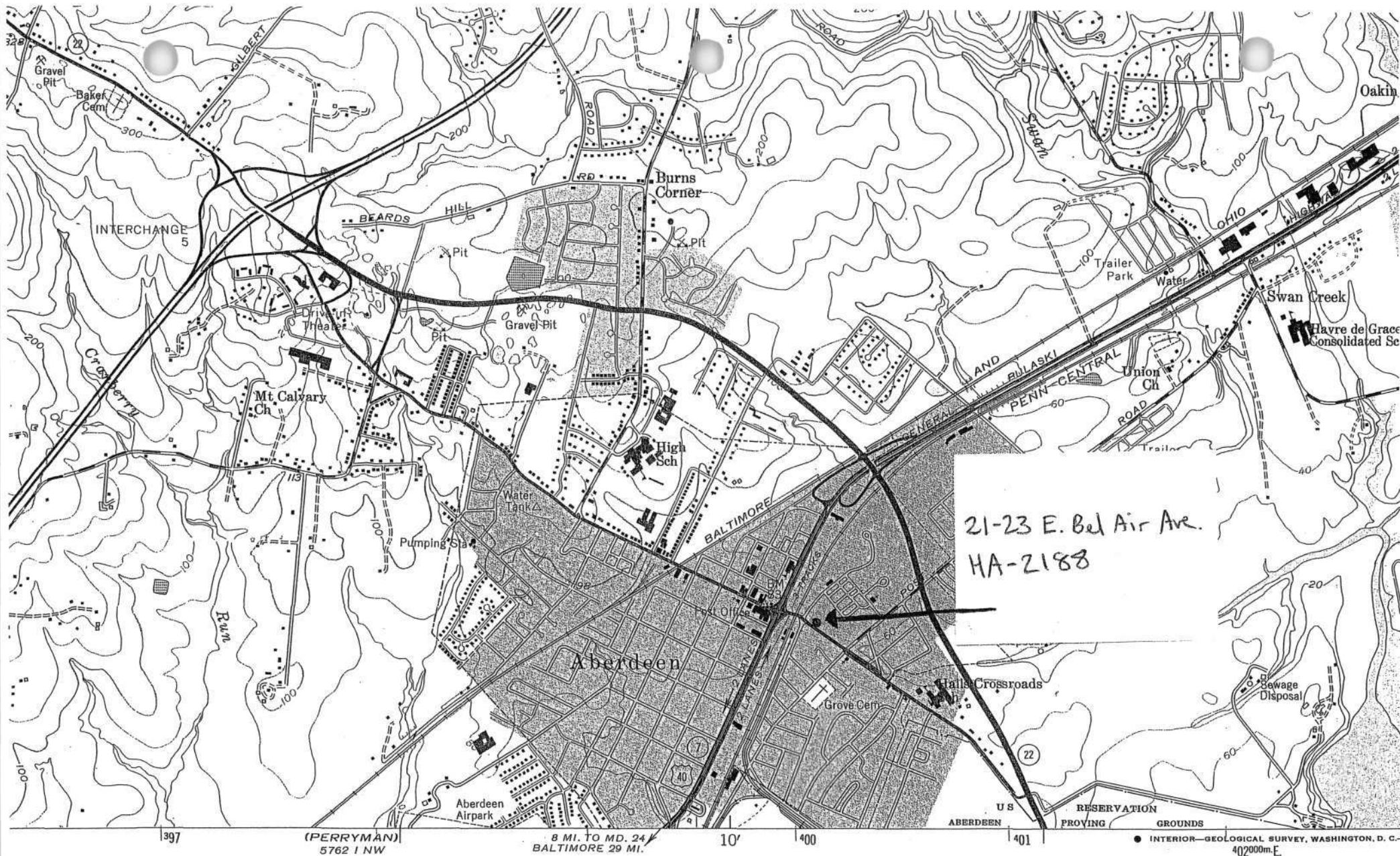
HA-2188
21-23 East Bel Air Avenue
Aberdeen quad, 1953 (Photorevised 1985)



National Web Map Service 6" OPM, 2007-08

Tax Map 25, P.2078





CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	4 LANE 6 LANE	Light-duty
Medium-duty	4 LANE 6 LANE	Unimproved

U. S. Route State Route

ABERDEEN,
SW/4 HAVRE DE GRACE 15' G
112000 117000 E



HA-2188

21-23 E. Bel Air Ave., Aberdeen

Harford Co., MD

K. Farnham

August 2008

MD SHPO

Front, view to E

#1 of 2



HA-2188

21-23 E. Bel Air Ave., Aberdeen

Harford Co., MD

K. Farnham

August 2008

MD SHPO

Rear + side, view to W

#2 of 2